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AK-ABU 967

Dept of State & DIA
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
8 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MORI C03326464

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 10
(As of 0630 EDT)

1030Z

THE MILITARY SITUATION

ISRAELIS CROSS SUEZ CANAL

Information just received from the Israeli Embassy in Washington via DIA indicates that Israeli armored forces have crossed to the west bank of the Suez Canal near the southern end. Another armored force is in the process of crossing the canal near the northern end. Another armored force is in the process of crossing the Canal near the northern end. The apparent Israeli intention is to execute a giant encirclement to destroy not only the Egyptian forces in Sinai, but their supporting elements and the SAM system. This information has not been confirmed by field sources.

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EGYPTIAN FRONT

1. Egyptian [redacted] men and equipment continue to "pour" across the Suez Canal. Our best estimate indicates that there are about two divisions and two tank brigades along the east bank, which would amount to approximately 400-500 tanks and 20,000 to 25,000 troops. The Israeli line of bunkers and strong points along the east bank has succumbed with few possible exceptions. The Israelis

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[redacted] The Egyptians are now in almost undisputed control of the east bank of the Canal.

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2. The Egyptians are attempting to consolidate their hold in the Canal area. [redacted]

[redacted] the Egyptians have no intention of penetrating deep into the Sinai, but will remain within range of their SAMs. Increased Israeli air attacks this morning appear to have concentrated on ground support missions and SAM suppression. The air activity may be the beginning of a major Israeli counterattack. Jerusalem Radio this morning broadcast reports from field reporters indicating that the Israelis had launched a pincer attack against Egyptian forces along the Canal.

3. In Cairo, activity has been considerably reduced since yesterday morning, possibly as a result of gasoline rationing that went into effect today. Muffled explosions that occurred early in the morning were reliably reported to have been the result of SAM missile firings near Cairo airport. The press continues to report Egyptian victories. The American community is still unperturbed, but foreign tourists in Luxor are being told to leave there as soon as possible and are being put on any available trains to Cairo.

SYRIAN FRONT

4. Except for air activity there has been no information on the battle on the Golan Heights. The extremely heavy Israeli air activity over the Heights and attacks on five Syrian airfields this morning may indicate that a counterattack has begun or is imminent on this front also. Syrian Radio, meanwhile, continues to talk of great victories and claims that 21 Israeli aircraft were shot down during the raids on the airfields. Syrian Radio also claims to have liberated "the largest part of the central sector of the Golan Heights."

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CEASE-FIRE DISCUSSION

5. Israeli Foreign Minister Eban formally informed UN Secretary General Waldheim that Israel would continue the battle until Egypt and Syria had been "routed and thrown back," and the cease-fire lines of 1967 and 1970 restored. Israel, Eban said, would not accept any cease-fire which left the Arabs inside the 1967 cease-fire lines. Any cease-fire would not only have to include an end to the fighting, but a return to "specific lines on the map."

SOVIET MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

6. There has been no significant change in the status of Soviet naval deployments in the eastern Mediterranean. The main body of ships--a light cruiser, two destroyers and a destroyer escort--remain at anchor in waters between Crete and Greece. Two Soviet ships are shadowing the US task group with the aircraft carrier Independence which is operating to the south of Crete. Other Soviet ships, except for an intelligence collector off the coast of Lebanon, remain in Alexandria or are heading toward the main force.

7. Soviet reaction to the Middle East situation continues to mix strong political support with an arms length attitude toward Soviet involvement. A government statement published this morning holds Israel responsible for the situation that led to the renewed fighting, but stops short of accusing Israel of initiating the hostilities. In contrast to Soviet commentaries in the early days of the 1967 war, the present statement does not speak of reserving Moscow's right to take necessary measures. A Chinese broadcast, however, condemns Israel for launching a surprise attack against the Arab world and attributes Israel's ability to do this to superpower collusion.

JORDAN

8. King Husayn yesterday congratulated Presidents Sadat and Asad on their forces' military

success so far, but said that he still intended to stay out of the fighting unless Jordan was attacked. The pressure to get involved, however, probably will be stepped up today when the Jordanian ambassador to Egypt arrives in Amman

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9. The US Embassy in Amman has emphasized that continued Israeli air incursions--one Israeli plane reportedly was shot down early this morning--increase Jordanian sensitivity to criticism for staying out of the fight. The Embassy says that while indications from the decision making levels are still favorable, there is increasing nervousness among the locals, and rice, sugar, and flour have disappeared from the markets.

OTHER ARAB STATES

IRAQ

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11. Moroccan King Hassan is expediting plans-- formulated before the outbreak of Arab-Israeli hostilities--to send a second contingent of 3,000 Moroccan volunteers to the front.

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12. Tunisian President Bourguiba has offered to send troops, but said it would take several days, and expressed his apprehension about the outcome of the struggle.

13. Additional press accounts of Libyan President Qadhafi's speech late yesterday reveal his reservations about the wisdom of the Egyptian and Syrian moves. He said he would "bankroll the battle" despite his disagreement with the strategy and objectives, and cautioned that the outcome "may not favor" the Arab side. Qadhafi said there would not be any forces on the battle front "except those belonging to the frontline countries," and some units of the Algerian Air Force. He conceded, however, that he was ready to accept the liberation of whatever part of the occupied territories the Egyptian and Syrian forces could liberate and that--even if the fighting should lead to catastrophe--the Arabs should not be sorry. The Libyan leader launched a strong attack on King Husayn, describing him as a coward.

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